

## **A Time to Honor Veterans**

*By: Congressman Jerry Moran*

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The past few months in Kansas and across the country we witnessed campaign season in full swing. If the amount of yard signs and television commercials were any indication, in Kansas these campaigns were more intense than ever before.

While elections and the campaigns that precede them are vitally important to our democracy and the direction of our country, I can't help but be concerned that amid the focus on endorsements, pundits, and politics, we tend to lose sight of what is truly important in our lives.

Perhaps it is fitting then that Veterans Day is observed in the week following the election to remind each of us where our priorities should be.

We dedicate this day to remembering and honoring our nation's veterans. Their service and the sacrifices of many who have gone before them have protected our way of life and allowed us to live in the strongest, freest, greatest country in the world. Our freedoms are so important that men and women are willing to put their lives at risk to defend and preserve them. They do not sacrifice for Republicans or Democrats; they sacrifice for the greater good of our country and to ensure freedom and liberty for their children and grandchildren.

Two weeks ago, I witnessed this sacrifice firsthand. I had the sad honor of attending funeral services in Wichita for U.S. Army Specialist Tom Moffitt. Specialist Moffitt grew up in Kansas and wanted to serve his country in the military. He joined the Army and served in South Korea before beginning his tour in Afghanistan this summer. On October 24th, Specialist Moffitt's unit was attacked by insurgents and Tom gave his life in defense of our country.

At the memorial service in Wichita, hundreds of friends and family members came to express their gratitude and sympathies to Tom's family. Outside, hundreds of Patriot Guard members stood guard, holding American flags.

The death of this 21 year old Kansan is a somber reminder of the cost of our freedom. As an elected official, it reminds me of my responsibility to serve our country in a way that honors

those who serve our nation. As an American citizen, it reminds each of us to live a life worthy of their sacrifice.

Now that votes have been cast and the election is over, let us focus on what is truly important – the things we learn from those who serve our country. Love of country and a belief in a better life for our children and grandchildren matters more than partisan games.

If you know a veteran - whether it's your sister, dad, grandpa, your neighbor, or your teacher - make sure to reach out this week and thank them for their service and dedication to our country.

May God bless our servicemen and women, our veterans and the country they love.